

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) announced today that the Accokeek Foundation has received a Rural Business Enterprise Grant of \$23,115 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The grant will be used to expand the Foundation's training and support programs for young, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers, as well as support the Foundation's series on sustainable agriculture and food justice. This funding, which Congressman Hoyer supported in a letter to the USDA, is projected to create 25 farm apprenticeship positions, place five socially disadvantaged farmers in scale-appropriate operations, place up to ten new farmers/farms in structured incubation, and enable 500 to 600 participants.

"The Accokeek Foundation has a long history of helping to sustain our region's agricultural economy and preserve our rural character," **stated Congressman Hoyer**. "This grant will ensure the Foundation has the resources needed to continue promoting sustainable agriculture and ensure our local farmers have the training and resources they need to be successful."

"For more than 20 years, the Accokeek Foundation has trained new farmers to operate successful, sustainable agricultural businesses that supply fresh food to local communities," **stated Lisa Hayes, President of the Accokeek Foundation**. "The Accokeek Foundation is exploring a significant expansion of its existing agricultural training operations, to include an agribusiness incubator, in Southern Maryland. This grant will provide important funding to help us assess needs and create resources for farmers."

Founded in 1957, the Accokeek Foundation has stewarded 200 acres of Piscataway Park in Accokeek, Maryland, on the shore of the Potomac River. This land serves as an outdoor classroom for educational programs about land conservation, historic preservation, sustainable agriculture, and environmental stewardship.